

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7015

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 9741

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CB

SUBJ: KHMER ISLAM MISSION TO ARAB STATES

1. DURING JULY 22 MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, I INQUIRED ABOUT STATUS OF KHMER ISLAM MISSION TO ARAB COUNTRIES. I RAISED THIS SUBJECT IN CONNECTION WITH NEED TO MAINTAIN DIPLOMATIC MOMENTUM ACHIEVED BY GKR JULY 9 UNCONDITIONAL NEGOTIATIONS OFFER.

2. LONG BORET REPLIED THAT BEFORE THE END OF THIS MONTH, GENERAL LES KOSSEM (A KHMER ISLAM), ACCOMPANIED BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING INTERPRETER, WOULD LEAD KHMER RELIGIOUS DELEGATION TO SAUDI ARABIA, FROM WHERE GROUP WOULD PROCEED TO OTHER ARAB STATES WHICH HAD INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE

THEM. AMONG THE STATES MENTIONED BY THE PRIME MINISTER WERE EGYPT, LIBYA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, OMAN, AND QATAR. LATER IN SEPTEMBER DELEGATION MIGHT EVEN GO TO SENEGAL AND MAURITANIA. SAUDI ARABIA HAD ALSO AGREED TO RECEIVE AN OFFICIAL KHMER GOVERNMENT DELEGATION; THAT GROUP WILL ONLY LEAVE PHNOM PENH AFTER LES KOSSEM'S VISIT. LONG BORET REITERATED WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME EARLIER, THAT MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS HAD BEEN MOST HELPFUL IN LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE KHMER RELIGIOUS MISSION BEING RECEIVED IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES.

3. IN ADDITION TO POTENTIALLY FRUITFUL EFFORTS OF
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SENDING KHMER ISLAM DELEGATION TO MUSLIM COUNTRIES,

PRIME MINISTER AND I ALSO REVIEWED OTHER IDAS FOR MAINTAINING THE DIPLOMATIC MOMENTUM ACHIEVED BY THE JULY 9 GKR NEGOTIATIONS PROPOSAL. PRIME MINISTER IS THINKING OF HAVING LON NOL SEND FOLLOW-UP MESSAGES TO SELECTED CHIEFS OF STATE. PRIME MINISTER COULD DO THE SAME WITH A NUMBER OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WHOM HE KNOWS PERSONALLY. IN REPLY TO HIS QUERY AS TO WHAT I THOUGHT OF THIS IDEA, I SAID THAT TIMING IS IMPORTANT BUT I CERTAINLY AGREED THIS SUGGESTION WAS ONE WAY OF KEEPING UP THE DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE. WHAT DOES DEPARTMENT THINK OF THIS IDEA?

4. PRIME MINISTER THEN MENTIONED IN PASSING THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING TRAVELING HIMSELF TO ASEAN CAPITALS DURING FIRST PART OF AUGUST TO GENERATE ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR THE GKR. SINCE HE MERELY DROPPED THIS IDEA AND QUICKLY PASSED TO OTHER TOPICS, I DID NOT PICK IT UP. I WOULD, HOWEVER, BE INTERESTED IN DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON SUCH AN INITIATIVE.

5. I ALSO GAVE THE PRIME MINISTER A BRIEF PAPER SETTING FORTH CERTAIN POINTS KHMER AMBASSADORS MIGHT BE INSTRUCTED TO MAKE IN "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR" OF SELECTED KEY NEWS-PAPERS IN COUNTRIES TO WHICH THEY ARE ACCREDITED. AGAIN, THE IDEA OF SUCH LETTERS WOULD BE TO HIGHLIGHT THE REASONABLENESS AND MODERATION OF GKR JULY 9 PROPOSAL WHICH MIGHT GENERATE SUPPORT FOR GKR IN UNGA. LONG BORET AGREED THAT SUCH AN INSTRUCTION TO ALL KHMER AMBASSADORS MIGHT BE USEFUL AND HE WOULD URGE THEM TO ADOPT THE SAME RESTRAINED NON-POLEMICAL TONE IN THEIR LETTERS THAT CHARACTERIZED THE JULY 9 GKR PROPOSAL ITSELF.

6. I ALSO POINTED OUT THE BENEFITS WHICH MIGHT BE DERIVED THROUGH INVITING SELECTED VISITORS FROM SOME NEUTRAL NATIONS TO COME TO THE KHMER REPUBLIC AND OBSERVE FOR THEMSELVES THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY; HOPEFULLY UPON THEIR RETURN TO THEIR NATIVE COUNTRIES THEY WOULD INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC OPINION TO ADOPT A MORE FAVORABLE STANCE TOWARD THE GKR. LONG BORET SAID HE WOULD THINK ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL. IN THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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CONNECTION I CALLED TO HIS ATTENTION THE UPCOMING VISIT TO PHNOM PENH OF MR. ADENAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ASIA OF THE INDONESIAN FORESIGN OFFICE. I STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS VISIT SINCE HIS RECOMMENDATIONS WILL CARRY WEIGHT WITH TOP INDONESIAN LEADERSHIP IN FORMULATING POLICY AND STRATEGY ABOUT WHAT INDONESIA WILL DO TO HELP GKR IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA.

7. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO SOME
OF THE CAPITALS DIRECTLY CONCERNED.
DEAN

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